

"Ingenious," they murmured, and moved away, with winks and sniggers.

Of course, it was impossible to cross the whole earth with this bit of glass intact. One afternoon his right foot caught on the root of a tree and his mask was shattered.

Thanks to that root, that afternoon a prisoner walked free.

— R. D. Valerio

Oaxaca Mexico

#### BUFORD AT COOKING SCHOOL

buford's at cooking school in his tall chef's hat & cowboy boots as he receives the question. "does saffron flavor or color the curry?"

"it depends on what dish we're talking about, sir," buford answers, looking out the window at the young woman eating her lunch on the lawn. "it both colors & flavors the poule au ruz."

"very good," says his old teacher watching the young woman packing her lunch basket, brushing crumbs from her skirts. "you may make assistant chef after all, buford. study hard & learn your lessons well."

#### BUFORD'S BUCKSHOT SATURDAY NIGHT

buford groans, picking bird-shot from his butt, tweezers alternating between pellets & cotton swabs dipped in a saucer of mash. what an awkward, vexing position buford thinks with disgust looking in his hand-held mirror. i look like a monkey fucking a football.

if sex is natural & pleasurable as recorded in the county library, buford reasons, supposed to be a meaningful expression without attachments of guilt — why must i suffer because dottie delacroix told me she wasn't married — especially when she furnished the condoms & an ice-cold six-pack of heinekin to go?